



ACTION COMICS® #897

\$2.99

U.S.



FINCH  
2010  


DIRECT SALES



89711

7 61941 20001 9

MAR 2011 DCCOMICS.COM



WAYNE!  
I CAN'T  
BELIEVE IT!

YOU  
THINK YOU KNOW  
SOMEBODY--!

HE'S LETTING  
DOWN THE HUMAN  
RACE.

# THE BLACK RING

PART  
EIGHT

paul cornell writer pete woods artist brad anderson colorist  
rob leigh letterer david finch & peter steigerwald cover  
will moss associate editor matt idelson editor  
superman created by jerry siegel & joe shuster

BORN IN SMALLVILLE  
BUT BELIEVING HIMSELF  
SUPERIOR, HE MURDERED HIS  
FATHER TO ESCAPE SMALLTOWN AMERICA  
AND BUILT AN EMPIRE ON HIS GENIUS.  
THE SWORDSMAN OF SUPERMAN, HE HAS  
POWED THAT THE WORLD WILL TURN ITS  
BACK ON THE MAN OF STEEL AND INSTEAD  
EMBRACE HUMANITY'S CHAMPION...  
AND FUTURE RULER.

Lex Luthor





BUT...  
IT DOESN'T  
MATTER.

SOON NOTHING WILL  
MATTER. THE PLAN TO STOP  
ANY INTERFERENCE IS  
IN MOTION...

MR.  
LUTHOR!

I GOT A REPLY  
REGARDING SOME  
INQUIRIES I'VE BEEN  
MAKING--

NOT NOW.  
HE'S THINKING.

DAMN IT,  
MACHINE--



--HE NEEDS  
TO KNOW THIS!  
ESPECIALLY GIVEN  
HOW BIZARRE THIS  
LATEST SPHERE  
LOCATION IS.

THOSE NEWS  
STORIES AND  
SCIENCE ARTICLES  
THAT MOTIVATED  
HIM TO GO ON  
THIS QUEST--

--A LOT  
OF THEM SEEM  
TO HAVE BEEN  
PLANTED--!

\*IN ACTION COMICS #890.  
--Media-Savvy Matt.



OKAY, THAT'S  
WORRYING.  
BUT TELL HIM  
AFTER.



HE'LL NEED ALL HIS  
CONCENTRATION  
NOW.



IT'S NOT  
OFTEN--



"...YOU HAVE TO INTERROGATE YOUR POLAR OPPOSITE."

JOKER.

LUTHOR.

HEY, YOU GOT A HAIRCUT.

MAKING JOKES. EXCELLENT.

WE'VE DISABLED THE CAMERAS, WE CAN TALK PRIVATELY.

MY ASSOCIATES AND I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS.

ABOUT A CERTAIN... ANOMALY. I'M SURE YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.

JAZZ HANDS!

HAHA HAHAHA!





"ASSOCIATES"! "PRIVATELY"!

AND PLEASE, THOSE CAMERAS ARE DIFFERENTLY ABLED.



I SEE YOU'VE GOT THE PRESS ON YOUR SIDE.

OH, SNAP! SHE'S GOT THE POWER!



JOKER, PLEASE--

--SOMEWHERE UNDER ALL THIS "MADNESS," REAL OR ASSUMED--

YOU KNOW WHAT?

I THINK IF I CAN JUST KILL BATMAN, I'LL SAVE THE WORLD!

INTERESTING. A DELUSION AKIN TO MY OWN CERTAINTY THAT--



--OH.



**HAHAHAHA!**

OH, THE RICH AND POWERFUL!

TAKES THEM A WHILE TO GET THEY'RE BEING LAUGHED AT!



**CRACK!**





DO NOT  
LAUGH AT  
ME!

LEX--!

DO  
LISTEN TO  
BARBARA--



--I'M  
FREQUENTLY  
NOT IN THIS  
BOX.

I ONCE  
BOILED A BABY  
IN FRONT OF  
THE FATHER.

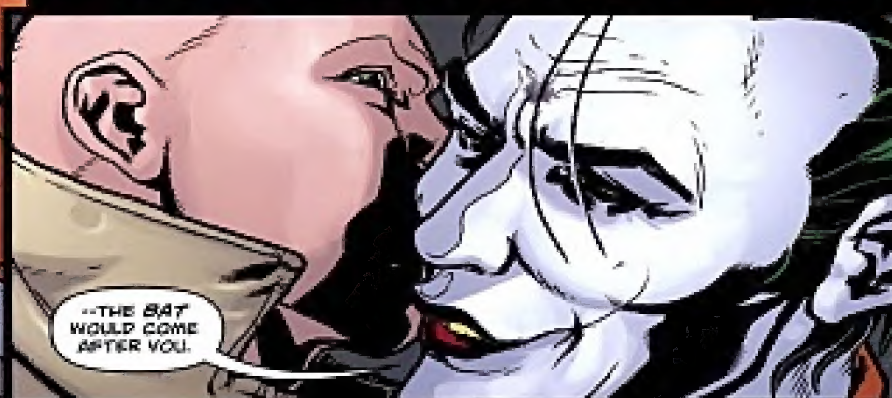
AND MADE  
HIM DRINK  
THE SOUP.

HAS IT  
OCCURRED  
TO YOU--

--THAT IF  
YOU WERE  
FOUND DEAD  
IN HERE--

--EVERYONE  
WOULD BE  
DELIGHTED?

NO--



--THE BAT  
WOULD COME  
AFTER YOU.



THIS WAS A  
MISTAKE.

WE'LL JUST  
REMOVELY TRAIN  
THE SENSOR  
PROBES ON  
THIS ROOM--

OH, ALL  
RIGHT--!



--THERE  
IS A GAME TO  
BE PLAYED  
HERE.

AND WE MUST  
ALLOW YOU YOUR  
DELUSION THAT THE  
UNIVERSE IS RATIONAL.  
THAT BARGAINS  
CAN BE MADE.

SIT.

I KNOW  
WHAT YOUR  
QUESTIONS ARE  
GOING TO BE.

BUT I KNOW  
YOU'RE GOING  
TO ASK THEM  
ANYWAY.

WE KNOW THAT  
SOMEHOW THERE'S AN...  
UNUSUAL ENERGY SOURCE  
IN THIS CELL. WE CALL IT  
A BLACK SPHERE.

OH,  
GOOD NAME.  
IF YOU NAME IT,  
YOU CONTROL  
IT. THAT'S  
SCIENCE.

ONE: A BLACK  
SPHERE WOULD  
NORMALLY FILL  
THIS CELL. HOW CAN  
IT BE IN HERE?

TWO:  
WHY CAN'T  
WE SEE IT?

AND, THREE:  
WHY DOES IT JUST  
HAPPEN TO BE IN  
HERE WITH YOU?

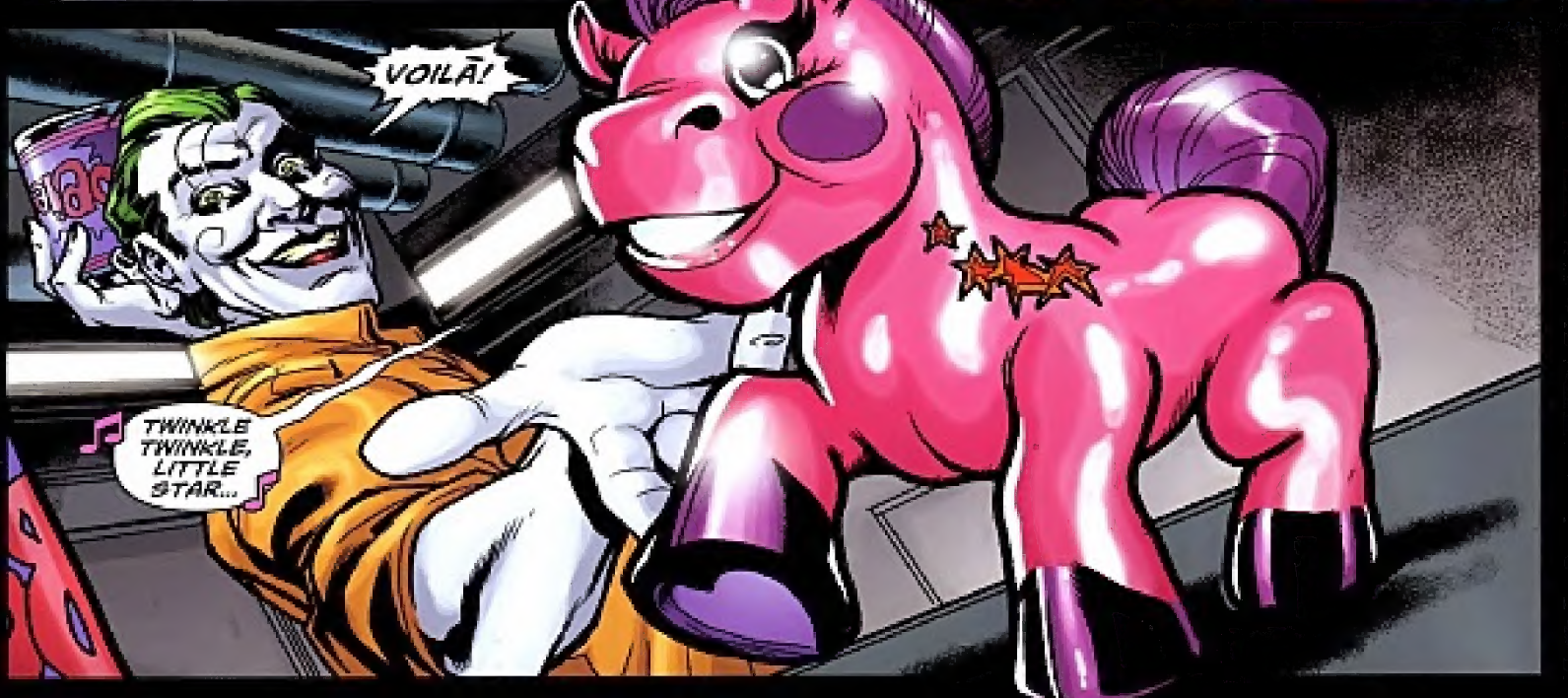
Heh heh  
heh --

ONE:  
HOW LONG IS  
A PIECE OF  
STRING?

TWO:  
WHEN IS  
A DOOR NOT  
A DOOR?

THREE:  
WHY DID THE  
HYPNOTIST HAVE  
A FORK STUCK  
TO HIS HEAD?













I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT DO IT.

IT TOOK ME AGES TO CONVINCE THE GUARDS TO GET ME ONE OF THESE.

I WORRIED THAT YOU MIGHT ARRIVE BEFORE IT DID.

WHAT'S ALL THIS--?

GAA.



BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WOULD ARRIVE.



IT'S ALL DOWN TO--

--THIS LITTLE BEAUTY.

MY KIND OF KNICKKNACK.

I FEEL ITS MERE PRESENCE IS HURTING SOMETHING.



BUT--phew!-- I'M GLAD IT MADE ITSELF THAT SMALL.

SOME OF THE PLACES I'VE HAD TO HIDE IT--

YOU CAN TOUCH THE SPHERE?

WHAT, YOU HAVEN'T?



NOT BEFORE OR AFTER, WE HAVEN'T DONE ENOUGH RESEARCH INTO--

THAT'S A BLACK SPHERE ALL RIGHT.

I'LL SAMPLE IT AND CHANGE ITS--





YOU--

--WILL--

--NOT!



NOT UNTIL  
I'VE GOT WHAT  
I WANT!  
I'VE BRED  
CULTURES  
UNDER THESE  
FINGERNAILS--



--NOTHING THAT COULD  
WRITE WAR AND PEACE,  
BUT THEY KILL IN  
SECONDS!



JOKER--!

--DON'T  
WASTE OUR  
TIME!  
YOU'RE  
BLUFFING!

WHY  
ARE YOU  
PROVOKING  
HIM?!

ENOUGH--!



YOU WERE ALWAYS GOING  
TO SHOW ME THE PONY FIRST.  
SO I WOULDN'T JUST CHANGE  
THE SPHERE AND LEAVE.

TELL ME WHAT  
YOU KNOW, AND YOU  
CAN HAVE WHAT  
YOU WANT.

YOUR  
FREEDOM?  
I CAN  
ARRANGE  
THAT.

MY  
"FREEDOM"--?!





--MY ONLY  
"FREEDOM"--

--WOULD BE  
TO FEEL LIKE  
YOU.

LIKE THE  
WORLD COULD  
BE MADE  
RIGHT.



THE WORLD  
CAN BE MADE  
RIGHT.

I'M  
NEARLY  
THERE.

LIKE  
CHAOS NEVER  
HAPPENED.

WHAT A  
RENAISSANCE  
MAN YOU ARE.



I KNOW THAT  
IF THE UNIVERSE  
IS MEANINGLESS...  
THAT'S A JOKE AT  
OUR EXPENSE.

IF IT'S  
MEANINGFUL...  
A DIFFERENT  
JOKE.

ANY MEANING  
WE MAKE  
OURSELVES--

--THAT'S US  
PRETENDING WE'RE  
IN ON IT.



BUT LISTEN  
TO ME, GOING ON  
AND ON--!

--WHEN YOU  
WANTED TO  
HEAR ABOUT  
THE PONY!





DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE NOTICED, BUT I'M A BIT OF AN ARCHETYPE.

CONSCIOUSLY SO.



I DON'T SLEEP MUCH. I LET MY MINDS DRIFT, ON THE EMOTIONS UNDER EXISTENCE.

AND IT TURNS OUT ARCHETYPES... ATTRACT.

BECAUSE OF THE HUGENESS OF MY NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, MY INTERNAL MELODRAMA...

OH, THE THINGS THAT COME TO VISIT ME!



I JUST WOKE UP ONE DAY AND THERE THIS WAS. I THINK MY FEELINGS BROUGHT IT HERE. SOME PEOPLE MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY LONG EXPOSURE, EVEN AT THAT SIZE--

--I'M IMMUNE.

REMEMBER I MENTIONED A DOOR?



THIS IS ITS KEYHOLE.



AND THROUGH THAT KEYHOLE--



--ONE CAN HEAR WHISPERS.

VOICES FROM EVERYWHERE.

I THINK MY NEEDS GOVERN WHAT I HEAR OF THOSE.

THAT'S HOW I HEARD YOU TALKING TO...YOU KNOW, HER.

THE BIG TEASER. SHE IGNORES ALL THE GIFTS I SEND.

BUT I DON'T THINK THE POWER KNOWS ABOUT THE WHISPERS, THEY'RE JUST A SIDE EFFECT. OF WHATEVER IT'S DOING.

THE "POWER"?

LEX, HE'S JUST TRYING TO CONFUSE YOU--

QUIET!

THE POWER IS WHAT'S BEHIND THE DOOR. I CAN FEEL IT.

ALL I KNOW IS, IT'S REAL. LIKE GOD.

BUT WORTHY OF RESPECT.

THAT'S THE WHOLE ENCHILADA.

DID I ENTERTAIN?

YES. YES, YOU DID.

YOU'VE CONFIRMED A NUMBER OF MY HYPOTHESES--





WHAT IS IT YOU WANT?



I WANT YOU TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE SPHERE.

MY NEED TO HIDE IT MADE IT SMALL BUT GOING THE OTHER WAY SEEMS TO TAKE MORE THAN PERSONALITY.

THEN I CAN USE IT AS A DOOR OF MY OWN. OR AT LEAST SNEAK THROUGH A CRACK.

THERE ARE PEOPLE IN GOTHAM THAT NEED KILLING.



WE MIGHT FIND OUT SOMETHING USEFUL.

SIR, WE KNOW THE PARAMETERS, BUT EVEN SO--!

DO IT.



SENDING ENERGY INTO THE SPHERE. NOW.

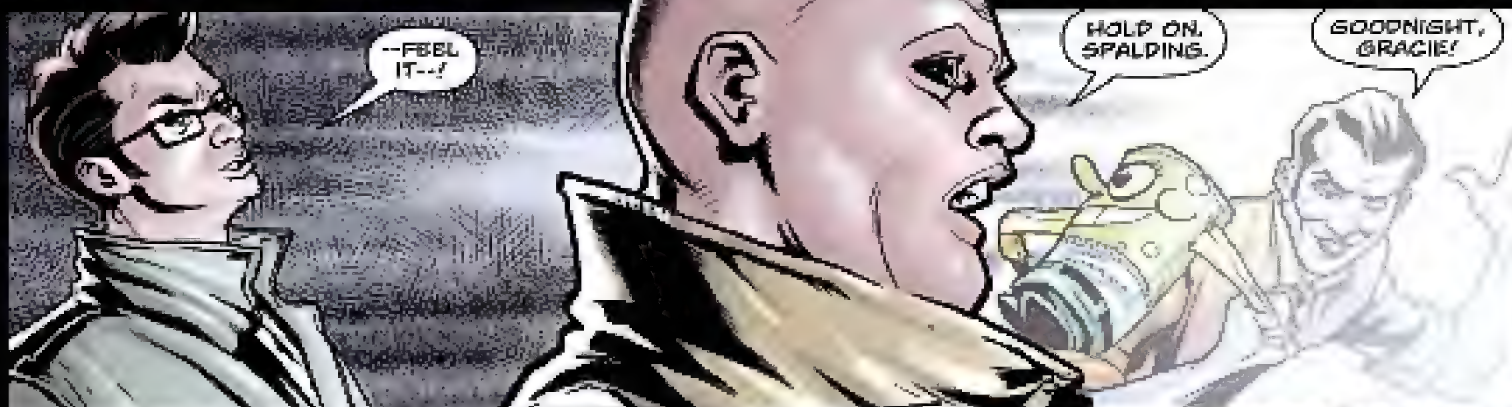
HUMMMMMMM







SIR, I CAN  
FEEL IT--



--FEEL  
IT--!

HOLD ON,  
SPALDING.

GOODNIGHT,  
GRACIE!



OH.



OH NO!

I HEARD  
IT ALL! IN A  
SECOND! AND  
IT COULD BE  
TERRIBLE!  
IF THAT'S  
WHAT'S GOING  
TO HAPPEN, I'M  
HAPPIER IN  
HERE!

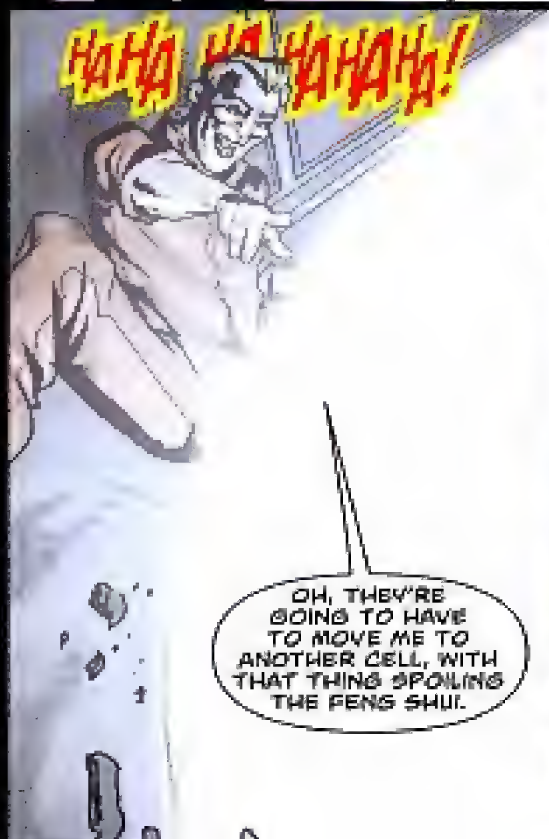
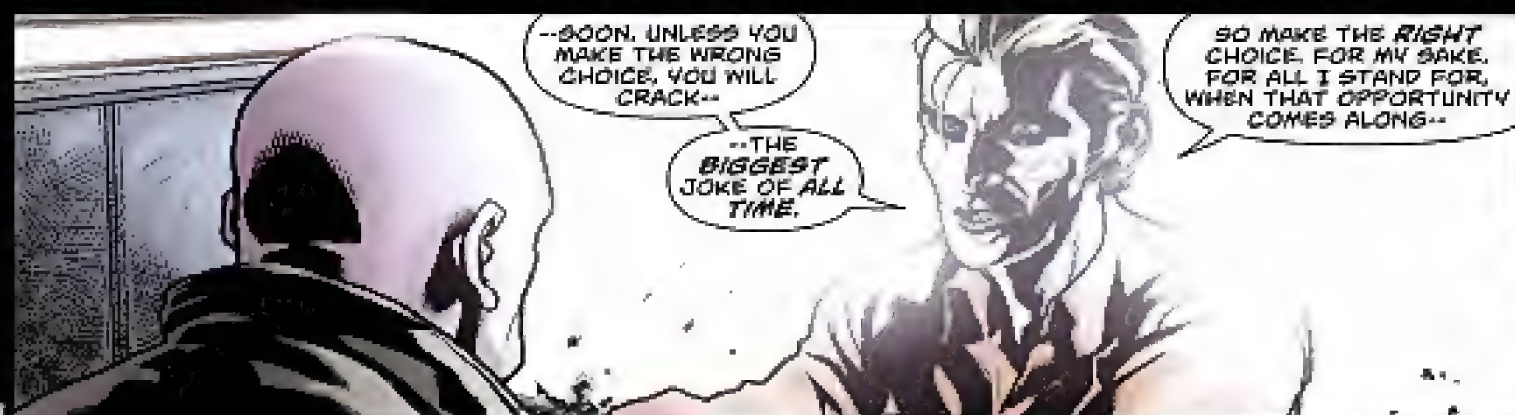


CHANGE  
IT!

QUICKLY!





















I HAVE A  
QUESTION FOR  
HUMANS.

WHERE  
IS THE HAIRLESS  
LEX LUTHOR?

HE IS  
LOOKING FOR  
SOMETHING  
I NEED.

THEBES  
SECURITY

NEXT: LARFLEEZE  
AND THE PITH  
OF THE ORANGE  
ACTION  
COMICS



**The official tie-in to the  
DC Universe Online game from  
Sony Online Entertainment!**

# **DC UNIVERSE ONLINE LEGENDS**



Written by  
**TONY BEDARD &  
MARY WOLFMAN**

Art by  
**HOWARD PORTER and  
ADRIANA MELO**

Covers by  
**RYAN SOOK and  
ED BENES**

A 26-Issue Biweekly Series Beginning  
**FEBRUARY 2011**

Comics Shop Locator Service:  
[comicshoplocator.com](http://comicshoplocator.com)

TM & © 2011 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved.

**DC**  
[dccomics.com](http://dccomics.com)





# DC UNIVERSE ONLINE #1 LEGENDS SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEW

AND SO FALLS THE ONCE GREAT  
SAVIOR, THE ALIEN WHO PROUDLY  
SHOUTED TO ONE AND ALL:  
I'M NOT A HUMAN BEING LIKE YOU.

OH, NO... HE CALLED HIMSELF A  
SUPER MAN, AND HE WORE A BRIGHT  
RED AND BLUE UNIFORM, DECLARING  
THAT HE WAS BETTER THAN US.

SO HOW DO  
YOU FEEL NOW,  
ALIEN?

BEATEN...  
BY A MERE  
MAN.

UNSH... NO...  
YOU'VE LOST...  
EVERYTHING.

Written by **Mary Wollman & Tony Bedard**

Art by **Howard Porter & Livesay**  
and **Adriana Melo & Norman Lee**

Colors by **Carrie Strachan** Letters by **Wes Abbott**

Assistant Editor- **Kristy Quinn**

Editor- **Ben Abernathy**

Covers- **Ed Benes & Randy Mayor**  
and **Ryan Sook**

Special thanks to **John Morgan**  
and **Dana Kurtin**





NO!  
I BEAT  
YOU. ME!

LEX  
LUTHOR.

HUNNNNNHHH

LUTHOR!  
GET AWAY  
FROM HIM.

CAPTAIN  
COLD? ARE  
YOU ANOTHER  
TRAITOR TO THE  
CAUSE?

I'M A THIEF, LEX. A  
CRIMINAL. I WANTED TO  
LOOT THE WORLD.  
BUT YOU...

...YOU  
DESTROYED  
IT. YOU'RE THE  
TRAITOR.











IDIOT, YOU NEVER UNDERSTOOD, IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY LIVE...

...AS LONG AS HE DIES.

NOW THE EARTH IS MINE.



AND HE'S FINALLY LEARNED HE'S NO BETTER THAN US.



HE COULD NEVER BE BETTER THAN...



...ME.







MY GOD...



BRAINIAC'S  
SHIPS...



...UNLEASHING  
HIS EXOBYTES...



BUT HE  
PROMISED...  
HE SWORE...

...ONCE THE HEROES  
WERE DESTROYED,  
THE WORLD WOULD  
BELONG TO ME.

TO BE CONTINUED IN:

**DC UNIVERSE**  
ONLINE #1  
**LEGENDS**

IN STORES BIWEEKLY/  
STARTING FEBRUARY, 2011





## HEY DC NATION!

We are pleased to announce the debut of letters pages in all of your favorite DC books. Now you have the chance to ask questions and offer your observations directly to our editors and creators — so write in now and let's *get* the conversations going!

To submit a letter go to:

[www.dcleaderspage.com](http://www.dcleaderspage.com)

Letters may be sent by regular mail to this address:

**Letters to the Editor**

DC Comics

1700 Broadway

New York, NY 10019





Please include your full name, and address, for confirmation purposes. Letters should be no longer than 500 words and should not include attachments. Letters may be edited for length or clarity and may be published in any medium. Letters become the property of DC Comics.

Unpublished letters will not be returned or acknowledged. Published letters may identify the writer by first name, hometown, state or country.



# The Reign Of Doomsday IS HERE!



Greetings, DC Nation. By now most of you have seen the beginning of the Reign of Doomsday storyline in this month's STEEL #1. This epic beat down was just the beginning of a six-part crossover, and there are tons of questions needing to be answered. Why is Doomsday back? Why is he targeting the other heroes and villains from the original Reign of the Supermen story? Where did he take Steel? We do know that his next target is appearing in next month's issue of THE

OUTSIDERS, and I'm pretty sure the image on this page spells trouble for Superboy. This story is heading somewhere big for the Superman universe and even has a top-secret final issue. Be sure to check out The Source blog ([dcublog.com](http://dcublog.com)) for more information and keep your eyes peeled — you never know where Doomsday may strike next!

The Reign of Doomsday appears in the following issues:

- Part 1: STEEL #1
- Part 2: THE OUTSIDERS #37
- Part 3: JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #55
- Part 4: SUPERMAN/BATMAN ANNUAL #5
- Part 5: SUPERBOY #6
- Part 6: ????

Be seeing you —

Ion Sattler

# DC NATION

**DC COMICS:** DIANE NELSON, President DAN DIDIO and JIM LEE, Co-Publishers GEOFF JOHNS, Chief Creative Officer PATRICK CALDON, Executive VP/Finance & Administration  
JOHN ROOD, Executive VP/Sales, Marketing & Business Development AMY GENKINS, Senior VP/Business & Legal Affairs STEVE ROTTERDAM, Senior VP/Sales & Marketing  
JOHN CUNNINGHAM, VP/Marketing TERRI CUNNINGHAM, VP/Managing Editor ALISON GILL, VP/Manufacturing DAVID HYDE, VP/Publisher SUE POHJA, VP/Book Trade Sales  
ALYSSA SOUL, VP/Advertising & Custom Publishing BOB WAYNE, VP/Sales MARK CHARELLO, Art Director

Fiber used in this product line meets the sourcing requirements of the SFI program. [www.sfi.org](http://www.sfi.org) SCS-SF00C-0130  
ACTON COMICS 850, March, 2011. Published monthly by DC Comics, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ACTON COMICS, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 288, Croyers, NY 10820. Annual subscription rate (12 issues) \$19.99. Canadian subscribers must add \$12.00 for postage and GST. GST # R123921012. All foreign countries must add \$12.00 for postage. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 2011 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories or artwork. This book is manufactured at a facility holding chain-of-custody certification. This paper is made with sustainably managed North American fiber. Printed by Quad/Graphics, Montreal, QC, Canada. 01/11/11.  
DC Comics, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company



*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,*

## SECOND CLASS CITIZEN







AVALON-DCP

Digital Comics Preservation